

VZCZCXRO2594
PP RUEHAG RUEHROV
DE RUEHMD #0535 0811445
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 221445Z MAR 07
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2142
INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY 0239
RUEHSB/AMEMBASSY HARARE PRIORITY 0017
RUEHLA/AMCONSUL BARCELONA PRIORITY 2557

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 000535

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

AF/S FOR STEVE HILL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/22/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [SP](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: SPAIN WILL STICK TO EU APPROACH ON ZIMBABWE

REF: A. STATE 34009

[1](#)B. MADRID 514

[1](#)C. STATE 33357

Classified By: DCM Hugo Llorens for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Poloff presented ref. A demarche to Antonio Sanchez-Benedito Gaspar, Spanish MFA Deputy Director General for Sub-Saharan Africa, on March 22. Consistent with ref. B, Sanchez-Benedito said that Spain is in agreement with the U.S., is very concerned at the current state of affairs in Zimbabwe, and has issued a communique to that effect. He called the current state of affairs in Zimbabwe a barbarity and said that Spain's preference would be for Mugabe to resign as soon as possible. Like other European nations, Spain is addressing the issue through Brussels, and Sanchez-Benedito noted that the EU already has in place "restrictive measures" on trade with Zimbabwe, which he said is just another term for economic sanctions. He added that the EU's Africa Working Group met on March 21 in Brussels, and that the UK drove the discussion, urging stronger sanctions. A special EU meeting on Zimbabwe will take place in early April to discuss this possibility. Spain completely supports the EU common policy.

[1](#)2. (C) Sanchez-Benedito noted that Spain's economic and strategic interest in Zimbabwe are minimal, though at one time there was a greater commercial presence. As such, Spain will defer to other European nations to lead the debate. He also noted that the Mugabe government is not monolithic and that it would be important to maintain contact with those inside the GOZ who are not in lockstep with Mugabe. Spain and the EU also wish to nullify the "anti-colonialist" rhetoric which Mugabe uses so effectively by relying on his old African allies and neighbors to apply international pressure. He pointed to Namibia and Zambia as countries that have expressed displeasure with Mugabe, and he suggested that the patience of Mugabe's neighbors may be wearing thin.

Visit Embassy Madrid's Classified Website;
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/madrid/>

Aguirre